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Bubble trouble

Skyline Dance Studio's competitive dancers took to the stage this weekend for their annual showcase performance. For more photos, see inside. /TIM YANO staff photographer

Dysart considers five-unit development near car dealership

JAMES MATTHEWS
Staff Reporter

A proposed condo development in Dysart earned favour at the township council table.

LRC Campbell Ltd. has plans for a condominium development of five residential lots and one common condo block.

Kris Orsan, the township's planning manager, said requirements have been met and he recommended that township council give the proposal its nod of approval.

He said an environmental impact study has been carried out that yielded recommendations to protect the property's environmental values and to minimize possible disruption by the development.

The proposed lots will be serviced by municipal sewage services, with each lot having one or more private wells. The sewage service connection will be established as a condition of the consent application. That will require an easement over the adjacent lands to the south of Curry Motors to facilitate access to municipal services at County Road 21.

This block will encompass a pair of existing driveways to access from Mallard Road and County Road 21 by way of 5121 County Road 21, which is the Independent Grocer location.

Orsan said all proposed lots will utilize the north-south driveway for access, with Lot 5 also fronting onto and having potential access from the mutual driveway.

To maintain proper traffic flow and prevent unintended access through the Curry Motors property, measures will be implemented to restrict vehicles between the proposed lots and the auto dealership.

Specifically, the existing access through 5065 County Road 21 will be closed to through-traffic so it won't be used as a shortcut between Mallard Road and County Road 21.

The privately maintained condominium road will give access through two entrances. One will be adjacent to Mallard Road at the north. The other will be at the entrance to Independent Grocers at the south of the subject lands.

The agreement with the township will require the developer to install a multi-use path during construction of the common element condominium road to address transportation to the proposed lots.

Prior to final approval, the owner has to use up to two per cent of the land for a municipal park. The township can also opt to forego that park space in favour of two per cent of the land's value.

The Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks has no concerns about the proposed plans, Orsan said.

"Other than noting some on-site natural features that will be addressed through the approval process," he said.

The subject lands generally slope from west to east. Much of the subject property has a subdued topography, with such areas generally corresponding to land cleared and altered in the past.

Naturally forested lands towards the edges of the property tend to have a more rugged terrain. This includes a hilly area in a mixed forest and higher topography grades at the very northwest corner of the property and lower at this community's south boundary with the cultural meadow.

It also includes a knoll within the mixed forest in the property's eastern portion. Bedrock exposure is more common in areas of moderately steep topography, although it remains very limited.

The former Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge public health unit broached the

see NO page 2

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Haliburton County pummeled by ice storm

THOMAS SMITH

Staff Reporter

On Monday, March 31, Haliburton County declared a state of emergency after an ice storm pummeled the area from Friday, March 28, until Sunday, March 30.

In the aftermath of the storm the vast majority of the county lost power, cellular reception, and internet services.

That same Monday, the County announced that the S. G. Nesbitt Arena in Minden would be transformed into an information and warming centre for all residents of the county and beyond. When you walk into the warming and information centre, you are greeted by smiling faces. Staff from the Township of Minden Hills have switched gears during the emergency, leading all hands to contribute to running the combined info and warming centre.

For the hungry, there are packaged foods available to take. Crackers and cookies sit besides the carafes of coffee and tea that flow freely to all visitors.

Before long, two crockpots are wheeled to the visiting area. One full of chili, and the other of chicken noodle and vegetable soup.

The lights in Minden were out, just like in Haliburton. Candace McGuigan, director of community services for Minden Hills says that they have experienced the blackouts in the warming centre like everyone else has.

By unfortunate circumstance, back-up generators are on the docket for Minden's Emergency Preparedness Plan for 2025. Forty-five cots line up in rows of nine in the arena's gymnasium. Each comes prepared with a blanket and pillow adorning the Canadian Red Cross's branding.

At the time of press, the cots have been used a small number of times, but are still readily available.

The warming and information centre has been open 24/7 since the declaration of the emergency.

The primary usage for the centre has been access to showers.

McGuigan says that county residents, as well as residents from other surrounding areas have been coming to the centre primarily to take a warm shower, charge their electronic devices, and enjoy a hot prepared meal.

One resident from Haliburton's Drag River area, Christine Coneybeare, says that her and her husband have been without power since Saturday March 29.

"My husband has been going down to the river to try and get water for flushing the toilet," said Coneybeare. "We have actually used runoff water from the downspout because it was closer and cleaner for boiling to do our dishes and flushing the toilet. The river is hard to get to. It's very high and with the snow it's hard to get to."

With two sets of stairs that are icy and covered in snow, getting to the lake has proven difficult for the 68 year old resident.

Coneybeare says that her and her husband are big campers, which has helped them be resourceful when it comes to cooking and utilizing water to its fullest. Without a phone line, they rely on using their generator for access to wi-fi and remaining in contact with the outside world. Her neighbours banded together to clear trees from their roadway, borrowing the Coneybeare's jerry can of fuel, and everyone checked on each other.

"We checked on an elderly neighbour down on Bakerville Lane," said Coneybeare. "She lives in a three season cottage on herself who said she was okay but that she really wanted a coffee."

Luckily she was okay and Coneybeare brought her a coffee.

With power poles broken in half and power lines strewn across driveways, Coneybeare has been told power would not be returning until nearly a week after the original outage.

At the time of press, there are still 3500 homes without power across the county. Minden remains in a state of emergency, with the warming centre offering it's services until the majority of power is restored to community members.

Gilbert Perez, a City of Kawartha Lakes resident, brought his three young girls to the warming centre to allow them to have their first shower in three days.

"We are almost without propane," said Perez.

Despite Perez's persistent calls to Budget Propane, they continue to tell him to phone the next day. Likely swamped with requests, Perez's propane tanks remain at seven per cent full.

"We keep being told we need to wait, and wait, and wait," said Perez.

Overall visitors to the warming and information centre say that they are happy they visited. The comfort of a hot shower is soothing during these trying times and everyone is able to have a sense of community.

No requirement for sidewalk at development

from page 1

importance to create safe and healthy and active communities. The unit urged that development proposals address climate change and public health concerns.

"All of the comments and recommendations will be addressed through the plan of subdivision or site plan control measures," Orsan said.

Mayor Murray Fearrey asked if the proposed development will use all of the land in the County Road 21 parcel in question.

"There was a consent that council approved a number of years ago that basically sliced off an undeveloped north portion from the lands that the active (Curry Motors) dealership is on," said Anthony Usher, the LRC Campbell Ltd. representative. "This would be the end of the story so far as the original Curry property is concerned."

Fearrey said council needs to decide whether to take the land for the municipal park or the cash in lieu of land.

"We don't have to do that today but we do need to do it," the mayor said.

There are no sidewalks near the lots to be developed or the automobile dealership. But Orsan said the intent for the development corridor is to have multi-use paths installed.

Usher said the verbiage in the conditions states multi-use paths.

"I don't read that as requiring a concrete sidewalk be poured here," he said. "It requires provision for some kind of a multi-use strip. That could simply be at the side of the road, clearly demarcated that it's for pedestrians and cyclists without it being a sidewalk."

Councillor Pat Casey asked about the type of businesses that would be zoned for the site.

"Are we talking restaurants again?" he said.

"It's going to be commercial," Orsan said. "That could even include a bank or those type of things. A clinic. These uses do not always have people that are coming by car or vehicle. They may be walking. They may be cycling to these locations."

And that's the reason for insistence on a multi-use pathway as a condition of development, he said.

Usher said the path was not a condition suggested by his client.

"We are quite prepared to go along with that with the wording that is before you," Usher said. "If council wants to change or moderate that wording, we don't have a problem with that either."

"It's a nice thing to think about, to have a sidewalk," Fearrey said.

"I think the future expansion is to have sidewalks come up through this area," Orsan said.

OPP calls for Shelter in Place

The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) put out a call around 10 p.m. the evening of April 6, 2025, for a Shelter in Place warning for the area of Harburn Road between Pine Avenue and Illman Road. The public service announcement shared on various social media channels cited 'an ongoing investigation' as the reason for the warning, and encouraged all residents within the region to lock all windows and doors and stay in place. It was noted that there would be an increased police presence within the identified area.

Approximately an hour and a half later, the warning was lifted. At the time of press, the *Haliburton Echo* had not received additional information as to the status of the situation from the OPP.

Staff

The comfort of home

The owner of the Mill Pond, Brad Archer, far right, donated the proceeds from the restaurant's coffee sales from the month of March to Places for People and their Sleeping in Cars event. Kim Switzer, left surpassed her goal of $4000 for the cause, pushing the total raised for the event to over $40,000 for affordable housing in Haliburton County. /photo submitted

Emergency services respond to ice storm

THOMAS SMITH

Staff Reporter

From left, Julian Lepine and Ocean Johnson-Storey remain posted at the warming and information centre at S.G. Nesbitt Arena. Both paramedics are from Renfrew County. /THOMAS SMITH Staff

On Monday, March 31, Renfrew County Paramedics were called to be stationed at the warming and information centre set up in S. G. Nesbitt Arena. The team of paramedics (that also consist of some York paramedics) offer Renfrew County's Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre to visitors. Their equipment includes their frontline paramedics bags, a vital meter, osteoscope, an IV kit, and a laptop to connect patients to a doctor virtually.

They also have a generator and a Starlink device in their portable trailer outside, if necessary.

The paramedics on-site have the capabilities to treat minor to moderate injuries. Some examples of treatable ailments include urinary tract infections, breathing issues, prescription shortages, dehydration, exhaustion, and mental health concerns.

Renfrew County Chief Paramedic Mike Nolan estimated that his team would be stationed at the arena until Friday, April 4. The team is still stationed there, as of our publication date, due to prolonged power outages.

The Renfrew County Paramedic Services have also deployed their remote access team across the county. Their fleet includes four-by-fours, three quarter tonne pickup trucks, and drones.

All of this equipment is necessary for their team to clear trees that have been destroyed by the storm that lay on the roads.

"Where required we did have assistance from both the County of Renfrew Sierra Team and the local Fire Departments to assist with access," said Slater.

With many paramedics that work for the county also living in the county, they were facing the same difficulties as other residents, says Haliburton County Paramedic Chief Mike Slater.

"The assistance we received from the other Paramedic Services has allowed us to keep up with the demand for normal requests for service with the County," said Slater.

Slater notes that Renfrew was not affected as heavily by the ice storm and was able to send support to the county.

On Friday, April 4, the Robert McCausland Memorial Centre in Gooderham was converted into a drop-in centre for those affected by the ice storm. The centre is welcoming residents from Gooderham, Highlands East, Kinmount, and Irondale. The centre is open from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. and offers a warm, safe place for residents to charge their devices, enjoy bottled water, and use the building's cooking facilities.

During this emergency, every EMS base in the county has been staffed 24/7 to provide medical assistance. Residents have been advised to travel to the stations, if unable to dial 911. Highlands East is also reminding residents that a public water tap is located at the Building Department in Gooderham as well as the Fire Hall in Wilberforce.

From March 31 to April 3, HHHS were in a 'code grey' due to a lack of telecommunications services, internet, and power outages. Out-patient services and community support services were cancelled including the Adult Day program, Meals on Wheels, and transportation.

It has been reported that some individuals who work with the hospital volunteered their own time and transportation to deliver meals and transport patients in need.

As of publication, the HHHS announced they are out of 'code grey'.

"During this time, the team went above and beyond to ensure that patients, staff, and community partners, and residents were safe, secure, and informed," writes a post by the HHHS. "Thank you for all that you do to support the health and well-being of our community during the most challenging times."

It's time for our Ice Out Contest

When do you think the ice will completely melt off of Head Lake in Haliburton? Send in the date and time of your guess with your name and contact information to emily@haliburtonpress.com. The closest guess will win a free year subscription to the *Echo*.

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Head Lake Park may lose six flower installations

JAMES MATTHEWS

Staff Reporter

The pedestrian bridge that connects the two sides of Head Lake Park is in a state of disrepair, and requires maintenance in the coming year. /ADAM FRISK special to the *Echo*

Six flower beds at Head Lake Park in Dysart will be removed as part of work to install a bridge.

Installing a new pedestrian bridge at Head Lake Park will require a crane to get the job done. It's anticipated that the work will happen in September.

The Head Lake Park Master Plan accounts for the removal of the flower boxes to create a better event space and wider pathways. When repairs are made, they can be made to match the directive in the Head Lake Master Plan.

The price tag for removal is tallied at $1,600. There will be a savings in what's spent on plants and flowers for these boxes. These funds can be directed towards the other flower boxes and beds within the park and downtown core.

"The thought was the easiest or the least destructive route for the crane to travel into the park would be where the current flower boxes are," said Andrea Mueller, the township's programs and events manager.

There's a fear that such heavy equipment moving through the park could damage in-ground sprinkler infrastructure.

Flower boxes between the park's entrance and the fountain will need to be removed this spring as a means to minimize the work's impact on the property.

"The flower boxes create an accessibility barrier given their placement and make it difficult for anyone pushing a stroller or using a walker or wheelchair to navigate," Mueller said.

Coal patch could be applied to the surface as a temporary measure where the flower boxes have been removed. Once the bridge has been replaced, staff can evaluate the damage caused by the crane and heavy equipment and bring repair solutions back to council for review.

"The planter boxes are not on asphalt," Mayor Murray Fearrey said. "They're on dirt."

"We suspected that," Mueller said.

"The other thing is the fountain is moving now," Fearrey said. "If you put that kind of (crane) weight beside it, I don't know where the fountain will end up because it'll tilt even farther. You might as well say you've got to repave that area where you're taking the planters out."

The mayor wanted to know where the municipality will find the money to cover extra paving.

"This is all part of the project and that part falls with Rob (Camelon, the township's public works director) and Andrea is just talking about getting the flower boxes removed pre-emptively to prepare for Rob's construction project," Councillor Tammy Donaldson said.

Fearrey asked why the work isn't going to be done from the other side of the water.

Donaldson suggested the park side would provide easier access.

"It was less intrusive if we come from the other side for everybody," said Coun. Pat Casey. "There's just grass."

"Well, it's trees," Donaldson said.

"They can trim the trees," Casey said. "They'll grow back."

"And the path in from the Rotary side is no good now," Fearrey said. "It's all humps and bumps and needs to be replaced anyway."

Casey suggested council suspend the issue until it can be revisited after the snow is gone and they can have a better look at the site.

"Apparently the boxes have five years left in their life," Fearrey said. "They're not cheap to replace."

Deputy Mayor Walt McKechnie said there's a good chance that the sprinkler system will be destroyed during the course of the work.

Council agreed to defer the issue.

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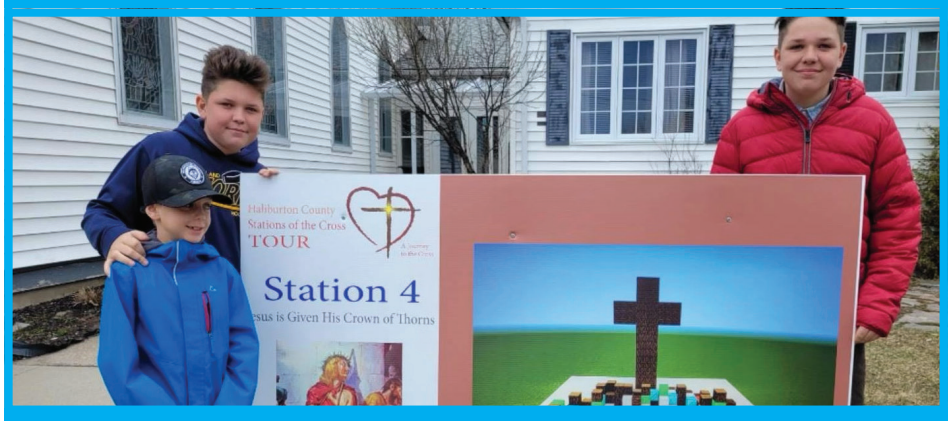

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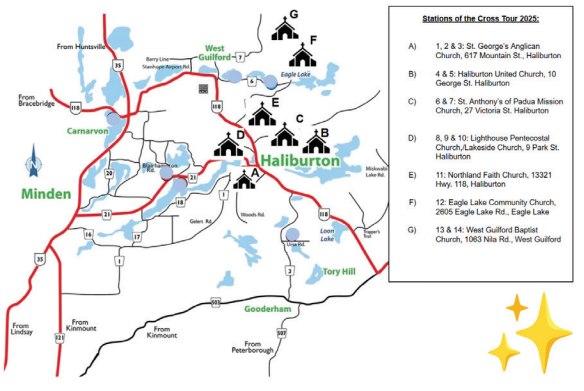
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Sam Tyler and Godfrey Tyler spent the day boiling off sap and discussing the sugar making process to guests at their sugar shack located at 6359 Gelert Road. /THOMAS SMITH Staff

Tyler family boils and bubbles without troubles on Maple Weekend

THOMAS SMITH
Staff Reporter

Nestled on the outskirts of Haliburton proper, Waverley Brook Farm is continued by the fifth generation of Tylers. Sam Tyler, son of Godfrey Tyler, is the fourth generation of sugar maker in the family.

Sam's grandfather, Charles, started making maple syrup in 1921.

A known jack of all trades, Charles was a farmer, veneer plant manager, repair man, and a computer whiz that kept extensive Excel spreadsheets on sap volume, brix, and fuel prices before many residents ever thought to bring a computer into their home. He was also one of the original core members of the Ontario Maple Syrup Producers' Association (OMSPA).

The Tylers run just shy of 500 taps throughout 10 acres of their forest, tapping 100 more trees than last year.

Since taking over the syrup production operation around 1989, Godfrey has seen a transformation in equipment from soldered to welded stainless steel, but says that the biggest change has been the methods of collecting sap from the trees.

In the past 35 years, research into tree health has completely changed sugar makers' harvesting methods. In the past, one large tree could have four taps, whereas today it would have two at the maximum. The spiles that tap into the trees have also shrunk from 7/16" to 5/16", allowing the trees to regenerate and heal from their trauma. Godfrey estimates that it takes a healthy tree only two years for the holes to be healed over.

Starting from the tree, the sap is primarily gravity fed through the pipes, with some assistance from their gravity pump on occasion. Behind their sugar shack, they collect their sap into a collection tank that can be fed into the pans through a series of pipes. Heat, time, and surface area from their pans are used to make the sap as close to syrup as possible. Propane burners are then used to accurately convert the sap into the delicious amber coloured syrup.

The Tylers were part of the official Maple Weekend this past weekend, organized by OMSPA. One visitor in the sugar shack came as far as Saskatchewan to sample the syrup and learn the sugar making process.

"It's been on and off this year with strange weather patterns," said Sam.

Sam reports that it is still too early to determine the productivity of the trees this year compared to last year.

With the ice storm that ripped through the county, the Tylers are fortunate to say that their bush received negligible damage.

"Our bush was just harvested and cleaned up," said Godrey. "So it was in a strong position after years of growth."

After removing broken and dead branches caused by the storm, Sam collected the wood to burn in their evaporator. In fact, all of the lumber that is used in their syrup production is selectively harvested from 290 acres of the family's woodland and cut down at their own sawmill.

Sam's favourite part of his toils in the sugar shack is the final product.

"I am partial to pancakes," said Sam. "With our setup, we tend to boil darker syrup because of our wood process and how intensively we burn."

Due to the size of their operation, syrup making can last over the course of two days, says Sam.

"The darker the colour, the stronger the flavour," said Jean, Sam's mother. "But they are still the same sugar."

With the sugar concentration of maple syrup being around 66.5 brix, Jean says that they usually do a bit extra to make their syrup slightly thicker.

"As a provincial group, they have a mandate to do research, testing, and advertising," said Jean. "As a member we can join in on [Maple Weekend]."

On OMSPA's website, around 100 sugar makers opened the doors of their sugar shacks for the weekend-long celebration.

From generation to generation, the Tyler family strives to live off of the land they are on. In the winter, forestry is their main source of income, maple syrup in the spring, gardening and livestock grazing in the summer, and meat sales in the fall.

"We don't fit any category anymore," said Godrey, noting that due to their mixed agri-businesses practices, it is difficult finding information, receiving assistance and simply being recognized by all levels of government.

The Tylers began discussing the succession of their business 10 years ago. Six years ago, siblings Sam and Joanie agreed on extending the sugar shack by building a clean room where the maple syrup can be finished off and packaged. Other initiatives that they have taken include freshening up their forest through selective harvesting, and advertising to increase sales.

"I have always enjoyed it and grew up doing it," said Sam.

A survey technician by day, Sam continues farming practices that he was taught by his family. With a budding young family, Sam and his fiance Anna enjoy the self sufficiency of farming.

"We've made a living from what we have done on the land," said Jean.

An anomaly, but not unheard of in Haliburton.

"A saying that we use is if you take care of the land, the land will take care of you," said Jean.

Last year, the Tylers sold out of their maple syrup entirely.

Relying on word of mouth and using their Waverley Brook Farms Facebook page, their maple syrup has become a delicious elixir produced right in Haliburton.

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points of view

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Buzz

emily stonehouse

Editorial

AS SOMEONE who writes words for a living, I am often captivated by the weight some add to fly-away terms. During election times, a series of buzz words are so frequently thrust into our vicinity.

We hear big talk about housing, about accessibility, about cost of living, about inter-provincial trade, about putting Canada first. There is a sense of nationalism that has accompanied this federal election in a way I have never seen before, and the only place I will give Donald Trump credit is that he has made us acutely aware of how much greater our country is.

But these buzz words seem to be what people want to hear. As they float into our ears, the politicians hope they stick and land there; a piece of the puzzle clicking into place for when voting time rolls around.

But these words are just words; with the added pressure ground into them from the voices who yell louder than us.

When I spoke to Conservative rep Jamie Schmale, he's no stranger to buzz words. It was a smooth conversation. He told me exactly what I wanted to hear, how I wanted to hear it. Ah yes, housing, ah yes, accessibility, ah yes, the cost of living, ah yes, inter-provincial trade.

Ah yes, those are all things we need. Thank you. Have a nice day.

It was to the point, quick, simple, easy; those pieces clicking into place and forming the puzzle for what we need in Canada.

When I spoke to Liberal Nell Thomas, it was different. It was bold, choppier, and real. We chatted on a stormy day, while she was preparing chicken soup to quell a cough. She was immensely present, passionate, and personal. A breath of fresh air. Suddenly, my puzzle pieces were shuffled around. She challenged the buzzed terms with gusto, took the weight off those words with tangible plans.

Where the local Conservatives sit comfy on their seasoned and smooth waters, the Liberals have added a grassroots approach to humans first, everything else second.

I am by no means telling you who to vote for. But as someone who writes words for a living, we must examine the weight to these words. The buzzy terms and puzzle pieces designed to click and clack for the betterment of our everyday lives.

Behind each buzz word, there must be a call to action. A plan in place. A next step forward to turn these jumbled letters and numbers into a human existence, a very real life, a very whole purpose.

Because behind these wants and needs that politicians claim to fight for, are the many lives impacted by the voices of the very few. And while these buzzwords have a place along the campaign trail, they do absolutely nothing if there is no passion behind them.

So while we wade the waters of this coming federal election, pay attention to the buzz words, to the tricks of the trades, to the puzzle pieces, and ask our representatives how they intend to turn their simple surface words into very real actions with purpose, with depth, with meaning.

Because that's the only way we will move forward.

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While the ice is slowly melting across Haliburton, it's still very present on local wetlands. Photo by Emily Stonehouse

Relentlessly Onward

Tales from the great

lynda shadbolt

Green meadow

I AM WRITING this article after a full day at Doc(k) Day that was put on by Those Other Movies (TOM). The theme of the day was "relentlessly onward with humanity and hope." Five movies were shown that all came from the TOM committee who attend film festivals in Sudbury and Toronto. They watch dozens of movies and pick the ones they want to bring to our community.

It was such an inspiring day and while there were very difficult challenges in each movie, there were people who were coming together to hold hope and continue to work for peace, understanding and the well being of all. I couldn't help but think about how we are all wired to have a negativity bias because our brains are trying to protect us as we follow what is going on in our world. It is easy to be negative. But negativity doesn't help anyone or this planet of ours. The world needs our hope, our compassion, our love and our action. It needs us to keep on learning and stepping up and into difficult conversations. The world needs us to foster our resilience.

What our work is, is to stay open to what is good and beautiful. We need to look after ourselves and commit to finding joy in whatever way works for us, and then when joy is running through our bodies, we work for change. Relentlessly. And we each do it in our own unique way. In *Beethovens's Nine, Ode to Humanity,* the director Larry Weinstein (who was in the audience and did a question and answer at the end) made a movie about music, war, and hope. It follows nine people who are all trying to understand the power and legacy of music. *Beethoven's Ninth Symphony* was completed in 1824 and Mr. Weinstein considered it to be Beethoven's love letter to the world for then, now and for the future. The film looks at how music can inspire us and find hope in the most challenging of times.

Porcelain War is a movie about three Ukrainian artists who chose to stay in the Ukraine and find beauty in all of the destruction. They want people to understand that it "may be easy to make people afraid, but it is difficult to destroy their passion for living." What is unique about this movie is that the artists were given cameras and they did their own filming and told their own story. There are many gripping moments in the movie, and many moments of incredible beauty. The artists fill themselves up in nature and then keep on making their pottery and fighting for their country. I once heard a story about a young person who was depressed, discouraged, lacking in energy and hope etc. (we all know the vibe). The person went to their elder to ask what to do and the elder asked four questions: 1. When did you stop dancing? 2. When did you stop singing? 3. When did you stop being enchanted by stories? 4. When did you stop finding comfort in the sweet territory of silence? We each have to find our ways to fill ourselves up and then express our love. The world needs us to each express our love, relentlessly

points of view

Colour me agreeable

steve galea

Loon Tales

I WAS TALKING to my buddy this morning. The poor guy and his family spent so much time living without electricity last week that he was seriously considering joining the Amish. But when I told him I was going to have to help Jenn pick out paint colours for the house this spring, even he felt sorry for me.

"You know, I thought six days of darkness, no heat, no internet, flooded basements, and living without hot, running water was bad," he said. "But I guess this puts it all into perspective, huh?"

He was right. What I was about to go through made his ordeal look like a cake walk.

You see, I happen to believe that the only reason the military intelligence people do not use choosing paint swatches as an interrogation tool is because they know that it would probably be against the Geneva Convention.

Just imagine.

"When is the attack and what units are participating?" the interrogator asks calmly.

"I don't know," the prisoner answers.

"Never mind. We want to paint your cell," the interrogator quickly replies. "We think this colour is perfect. What do you think?"

"I….I… like it," the terrified prisoner answers.

"Oh really?" the interrogator expertly responds. "Because now that I look at how it goes with the furniture, I'm not so sure. Is there any other colour that catches your eye?"

"What do you like?" the prisoner nervously says.

"You choose," the interrogator counters.

"They're planning an attack on your right flank at dawn!" the broken prisoner blurts out. And who could blame him. After all, a human can only take so much.

"How many units and what are their configurations?" the interrogator follow ups.

"I don't know!" the hapless prisoner replies.

"Never mind. So what colour catches your eye? I like this iceberg blue… And navy for the trim."

"Yes, yes…That looks good. Let's go with those colours…"

"On second thought…"

"Two armoured regiments and three divisions of mechanized infantry will spearhead the assault….Please! Please! No more paint swatches… I'll tell you everything!"

This is essentially what happens to every significant other when their spouse decides to choose paint palettes. It's not pretty.

So, when Jenn asked me later that morning to help her choose colours, I won't lie, I started trying to figure out a reasonable way to extricate myself from the situation. Fortunately, I had recently watched a YouTube video on fainting goats, so I was not entirely devoid of ideas.

Unfortunately, you have to get up sometime.

And when I did, Jenn was right there with the paint swatches.

"I was thinking that we paint the living room in this colour and the trim in this colour. Do you think that's too dark?"

"Uh, yes…. A little," I replied.

"I disagree. I mean the big bay window let's in a lot of light…" She countered.

"I see that now," I said. "I'm good with it."

"Oh, but these two colours are so much better!" she then exclaimed.

"Sure," I answered. "I'm with you on that."

"I don't know," she replied. "I always choose the colours. Hey, you live here too. Why don't you choose? It's only fair."

"Well," I said happily, "actually, I really like this colour and white for the accent," I said.

"Really?" she responded.

"Yes," I muttered.

"No," she answered. "We're going to go with these two…"

"Great," I said.

"No problem," she smiled. "Thanks for helping."

"Can I go now?" I whisper.

"Sure, right after we choose the lamps…"

I tried fainting once again.

pic *of the* past

Just imagine the stories behind the lives of all these people. This week's Pic of the Past was taken in early 1900s. It shows William and Sarah Dummitt and their children. Back row, standing: Arnold and Ella. Middle: Hazel, father Bill, Lavina, mother Sarah and Bill. Front row: Cecil on his father's knee, Edith and Elsie on her mother's knee. The family had a home on Soyers Lake Road. Our thanks to the Dummitts' granddaughter, Roean Barnhart of Carnarvon, for sharing the photo with us. /FILE

letters to the editor

Neighbours, relatives or enemies

To the Editor,

The saying is that "good fences make good neighbours".

We should keep that in mind when conversing with the population of the country to our south (and to some extent our northwest). The attitude being expressed by the present President of the United States of America towards Canada is not new. It is an attitude ingrained (in my opinion) in the American psyche. Combined with an isolationist attitude and a real belief in the concept of "manifest destiny" they are not "good neighbours" and have never been so.

From the very beginning of the "American Dream" there has been the underlying attitude to annex Canada one way or the other. In October of 1774 the Continental Congress wrote a manifesto to the people of Canada and in it said "You are a small people, compared to those who with open arms invite you into a fellowship. A moment's reflection should convince you which will be most for your interest and happiness, to have all the rest of North-America your unalterable friends, or your inverterate enemies." Inverterate meaning unchangeable.

The threat has been there continuously. The "Louisiana Purchase" resulted from the insolvency of France and the purchase of Alaska came about through the costs to Russia for its maintenance and lead to aspiring presidential candidate slogans of "Fifty-four forty or fight".

Do not discount their intent during the war of 1812.

Our boundaries were negotiated and established recognizing the interests of two different peoples and governments. They signed the deal which they negotiated. Canada's negotiators were not solely our own appointments but we have stuck by them notwithstanding that Canada had a better case for a more advantageous boundary (that would take in portions of Michigan Wisconsin, North Dakota, Wyoming Montana, and Washington).

Unlike today's President of the U.S.A., we stick to our contract obligations.

They are not friends and really not relatives either. So walk quietly and keep your head up, your mouth shut and your doors locked because they are envious of our life and government style and need what we (Canada) own.

Just my rambling thoughts and concerns from an old person.

David Bishop,
Haliburton

Letters to the Editor note: Submissions are subject to editing for newspaper style and punctuation.

More letters to the editor on page 8

Dancing with the local stars

Skyline Dance Studio held their annual showcase recital on April 6 at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion in Haliburton. The nearly three-hour show had an afternoon edition and an evening edition, in which the studio's competitive dancers strut their stuff for two sold-out crowds. The dancers are off to represent the Haliburton Highlands at their first competition of the year this coming week in Collingwood. /TIM YANO staff photographer

letters to the editor

We 'lucked out'

To the Editor,

I recently noticed that my wife, Janice, never fails to read *The Echo's* editorial by Emily Stonehouse. "Why?" I asked. Her response was that "I like what she has to say. A lot; and, as an avid reader, I also really enjoy her writing style".

In today's *Echo* (April 1st) I found out exactly what Janice meant, twice. Emily's 'Until it's gone' editorial went right to the heart of the recent ice-storm's impact on our lives: not "a wispy warm romance", but "something sharply different: a chilling fear". Eloquent. As Emily put it, with brilliant clarity: "No phone calls, no internet, no light"... and for many, no heat.

On page 9 was Ms. Stonehouse's article entitled 'Clearing the air on the federal election', which was quite elucidating. She astutely observes that "many are rolling their eyes when it comes to heading to the polls once again". Then she interviews a knowledgeable Parliament Hill insider who educates us about the difference between provincial and federal politicians. Ms. Slade also directly responds to the folks who say that Mark Carney isn't our Prime Minister, 'because we didn't vote him in'. The reason for this is that we don't do that in Canada. Ever. When we vote we're voting for the party, and not the leader. The leader, or Prime Minister, is chosen not by the public (us), but by card-carrying party members. Furthermore, this article rightfully alerts us to the "circulation of misinformation", which is "the biggest challenge out there" because it can adversely influence our decision-making process. She urges us to "do your research", and "plan out your vote", and so I shall.

Emily Stonehouse is an excellent journalist and an exceptional newspaper editor. She's a 'keeper'.

René Benoit,
Haliburton

Dr. Nell
THOMAS
HALIBURTON
KAWARTHA LAKES
"Dr. Nell Thomas has a measured, compassionate quality she'll bring to her role as Member of Parliament."
Your vote is your power to shape the leaders who will represent you.
A vote for Nell is a vote for Mark Carney. A vote for Canada
Liberal
CANADA STRONG
Authorized by the Nell Thomas Campaign.

Juno Award winner Ceiligh Cardinal set to play Haliburton

THOMAS SMITH

Staff Reporter

For those that kept up with the Juno Awards this year, you had the opportunity for Celiegh Cardinal to grace your ears while she sang *Light of the Moon* during the 'In Memoriam' segment of the Juno gala event, a tribute to Canadians in the music industry who have passed away in the past year.

The song was written in tribute to musicals idols and loved ones that have passed on. It was the perfect fit for the segment, says Cardinal.

With her music being showcased in both film and television, singing with The Tragically Hip, and touring across the world, this Juno-winning artist is not a concert you can miss.

This year, Cardinal was nominated for two Junos, Adult Contemporary Album of the Year for *Boundless Possibilities* and Contemporary Indigenous Artist or Group of the Year.

Stressing out during the event, Cardinal called her sister who said "Dude, this has been our dream since we were ten years old."

"I just always believed that it was my path, I believed it was my calling, she said. "It was the space that I was going to have success and I would achieve the things that I wanted to."

Cardinal had a not-so-uncommon Indigenous experience while growing up outside of any Indigenous culture, with her father being raised in foster care.

"He grew up in white, Christian homes. That's who he ended up marrying," said Cardinal. "They ended up raising me in a white Christian home and so I didn't develop a relationship to (my) culture until I was older and sought it out on my own. Being Indigenous in Northern Alberta is deeply woven into my life experiences and thus reflected in my music."

Juno Award winner Celeigh Cardinal will be performing in Haliburton on April 19 through the Haliburton County Folk Society. /Photo submitted by artist Sheena Zilinski

"It isn't really the best things, because Northern Alberta isn't super nice to Indigenous women," said Cardinal. "Most of Canada isn't. It's woven into my self esteem, into my self-worth, into my identity."

Cardinal's debut album, *Everything and Nothing at All* came out in 2017, and launched her professional career to new heights. With the accompaniment of blues rift and country twang, Cardinal's voice is both energetic and fun. Through rawness and humour, just as the title suggests, the album offers an eclectic and fun mix of both genre and storytelling.

Her second album, *Stories from a Downtown Apartment* from 2019 increases the rawness that is apparent in her inaugural album. Written in her downtown Edmonton apartment, Cardinal reflects on true stories from her life. Cardinal won a Juno award for the album in 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic. The apartment building in which the album was written was home to an artist community, with Cardinal's favourite memory being the conversations with other creatives in the building's coffee shop and her ability to grow plants with her southern facing windows.

"I won the award when I was sitting on the couch with my mother, my son, and my friends," said Cardinal. "It was lovely, it was so different. It felt right."

"It also felt like a massive privilege," said Cardinal. "My friendships with the Indigenous musicians across Canada have grown so much. It was so beautiful to be honoured along with friends."

Cardinal's latest album, *Boundless Possibilities,* released in 2024, brings an overall more soulful sound than her previous albums, while guiding the listener alongside a journey. From pop tracks to soundscapes fit for an ethereal stargazer, *Boundless Possibilities* is a perfect addition to Cardinal's repertoire that remains authentic to the artist's signature sound.

Throughout Cardinal's career, she has noticed that there are songs that resonate with her more than others, depending on where she is in life and how she is feeling.

"My music is directly affected by the varied genres of influence that I have. I want to do everything," said Cardinal. "That is very hard to turn into one thing. The common thread throughout it is a soulful vocal through soulful storytelling."

"I often call them sad girl songs," says Cardinal with a laugh.

"There is one song in particular, *There Are Some Things We Will Never Do*, from my album *Stories From a Downtown Apartment* and it is a song I wrote thinking that it was a love song but by the end I was like oh, this is a breakup song."

For a really long time, Cardinal says that there has been an internal need to act like an "adult". Recently, through small things like eating hotdogs and putting ketchup on her scrambled eggs (which she has always loved), she says that she has returned to letting herself be silly.

Cardinal notes that the worst hotdog she has eaten was in Sweden, topped with shrimp salad. On the other hand, the best hotdog she has had is from a street vendor in Copenhagen. Cardinal says that she has thrown around the idea to even start her own hotdog reviews.

Cardinal says that the reconnection to her younger self shines best through her performances on the stage. Taking herself too seriously can lead to tightness, especially in the throat and voice, says Cardinal. Both her vocal coach and therapist both encouraged her to allow herself to be playful on stage and be free.

"That has impacted my ability to sing better," said Cardinal "So much better, so much more free and it's helped my body loosen up."

When Sebastian Gaskin won the Juno this year for Contemporary Indigenous Artist or Group of the Year, she cried.

"It feels really special to be validated and to be a part of that community and to be honoured as part of that community."

An advocate for fledgling artists, Cardinal has been outspoken about artists managing themselves and learning the ropes of the music industry before relying on others and hiring external staff.

"I hear a lot of artists when they are emerging saying I need to find a manager, I need to find a producer, I need to find a booking agent," said Cardinal. "I think it's really important to do all of that stuff initially because how do you know what you need, how do you know what it costs, how do you know what you should be paying, how do you avoid getting exploited, how do you avoid being used, it's about having the knowledge and knowing what it takes."

Knowledge of the industry, especially booking, allows musicians to become better in business in general, says Cardinal.

Cardinal says that she has not had many opportunities to play in Ontario throughout her career and is very excited to play the Northern Lights PErforming Arts Pavilion in Haliburton on April 19 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets for the event can be purchased through the Haliburton County Folk Society's website. Cardinal will have a selection of merchandise for sale at the concert including t-shirts, toques, vinyls, and CDs.

Cardinal will also be playing at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa and has additional dates throughout Ontario this year.

Cardinal's music is available to stream on all platforms and has merchandise available for sale on her website celeighcardinal.com.

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Hiking Haliburton, one week at a time

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

Rod Frketich has spent a lifetime listening and sharing the stories of Canadians, and hopes to add that component when guiding the upcoming Sunday Rambles along the Haliburton Rail Trail. /photo submitted

There's no shortage of stories in Haliburton County, and Rod Frketich wants to learn them all.

Originally hailing from the Hamilton region, Frketich has stepped into the role of hike leader for the popular Sunday Rambles, presented by Friends of the Rail Trail.

The casual guided hikes are scheduled for every Sunday over the months of April and May, and start at 11 a.m. for all who care to join. The hikes pride themselves on being social, open to all ages, and 'at your own pace' for anyone interested in checking them out.

"I've spent a lot of time hiking the area," said Frketich. "But to go out with a group of people, that's a different way of experiencing it."

Frketich spent his career as a photojournalist, and has worked across the province of Ontario, including Barry's Bay, Orillia, Pembroke, and Timmins. He has spent time with *Canadian Press,* the *Globe and Mail,* and most recently, the *Waterloo Record.*

Upon his retirement from photojournalism, Frketich dove into his other interest; exploring different regions, often with a camera on his back. He has regularly been visiting the area to spend time at his partner's cottage in Moore Falls, and has a deep passion for the stories of rural communities. "It's really the history part I am interested in," he said. "I've spent a lot of time wandering around the area, but I want to learn more."

With an avid interest in hiking, Frketich is no stranger to guiding a group. "I always want to make sure what we do matches the group we have," he said, noting the different comfort and experience levels of the hikers.

Sunday Rambles are designed to explore a chunk of the Rail Trail each week. On April 13, hikers will meet at the Lochlin Community Centre. On April 2, hikers will explore the falls on Ritchie Falls Road, and on April 27, they will meet at Cemetery Road in Gelert.

Then for May, to kick off the month on May 4, the starting point will be Milburn Road, followed by Geeza Road on May 11, Howland Junction Road on May 18, and finally, 7286 Gelert Road just outside the village of Haliburton for May 25.

The intention of the hikes is to familiarize hikers with the Rail Trail, as well as the opportunity to learn about history, flora and fauna, wildlife, and the natural wonders of the designated hiking space.

And thats what Frketich is most excited about. "I really want to hear all the stories of the area," he said. Frketich encourages hikers to bring a camera, if they are interested, and he can share his knowledge that he gained from a lifetime in the industry.

All Sunday Rambles are free of charge, and designed for all levels of hiking. No pre-registration is required.

For more information, follow Friends of the Rail Trail Haliburton on Facebook, or call or text 365-323-3839.

FEDERAL ELECTION / MONDAY, APRIL 28

#ItsOurVote

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Contact Elections Canada if your voter information card

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Elections Canada

Farmers Association to get dirty in Eagle Lake

THOMAS SMITH

Staff Reporter

With the recent ice storms, tending to your garden seems like a distant dream.

A dream that may be closer than you think.

The Haliburton County Farmers' Association is currently preparing for their "Optimizing Garden Space and Soil Usage" event. Their talk will be presented entirely in-house by the Farmers' Association. The presenters range from experienced gardeners to seasoned homesteaders that have grown their own crops to maintain their food supply.

As gardeners in the county know, there are many difficulties to have a successful garden here. Situated in hardiness zone 4B, Haliburton County's location in central Ontario means that we face shorter growing seasons, heavier amounts of snowfall, and later chances of frost that can zap your saplings dead.

"Growing conditions can vary even down the street," said Farmers' Association President Minna Schleifenbaum.

We have all bought berries at the local grocery stores, only to discover that they are growing fuzz the next day. We are told day after day to supply your family with fresh fruits and vegetables, despite the exorbitant costs on our shelves. In addition to the threat to grocery prices due to tariffs, now is the best time to learn how to grow your own nutritious food with a home garden, reducing your gamble on produce's longevity.

A property with a majority of its trees being maple will have entirely different growing conditions than a property that is covered with coniferous trees. With the county being situated along the Canadian Shield, soil depth varies on properties from a few inches to a few feet before you hit rocks.

If there is one thing Haliburton County is good at growing, it's rocks, said Schleifenbaum.

As experienced gardeners and homesteaders, the purpose of this talk is for the presenters to introduce people towards creating their own gardens at their home in Haliburton County, regardless of your soil conditions.

Topics that will be discussed include starting seeds at home, how to propagate fruit trees, how to maximize the potential of space available, companion planting, and learning how to utilize the soil you have, or how you can alter its properties to suit your needs. Everyone is welcome to come to the talk and participate. Seasoned gardeners are also encouraged to come to the event and lend their knowledge to the discussion.

Growing your own garden offers the opportunity to get outside in the fresh air, exercise, and grow some fantastic tasting fruits and vegetables. Things like harvesting your own seeds, creating your own fertilizer, and encouraging biodiversity are all ways that can reduce your grocery bill and the costs associated with gardening.

Soon we will all be united in the battle against deer eating your fruit tree saplings, moles digging up your garden, and chasing the groundhogs out from your garden shed. All in great fun, that will make lasting memories for the entire family.

There is a $20 fee to participate in the event. Participants will be taking home cuttings from fruit trees and seeds for people to start their dream garden at home. Any money raised that is left over will be going back towards the Association's large animal first aid kit.

Two years ago, the Farmers' Association was in dire straits of membership numbers without a large animal vet. The large animal first aid kit was made available to members, filled with medical supplies and medications for treating their animals themselves.

While there is the Veterinary Assistance Program, funding for veterinary mileage only begins as soon as they cross county lines, says Schleifenbaum. With vets coming from areas like Peterborough and Bancroft, the price to bring a vet from other cities is pricey for farmers. Through banding together as the Farmers' Association, agriculturalists can rely on each other for advice, assistance, and can combine their voices in an effort to bring a large animal veterinarian to Haliburton County.

Schleifenbaum reports that their numbers have been gradually rising.

The Haliburton County Farmers' Association's "Optimizing Garden Space and Soil Usage" event will be held on April 12 at The Wild Life Farm in Eagle Lake, owned by President Schleifenabum. Weather permitting the event will be held outside, with their event being held inside their riding arena if necessary.

Spots in the event can be reserved by texting 705-306-9346 with your name and number of people that are attending.

Wanted: local kids who listen to Mother Nature

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

The Ontario Highlands Tourism Organization (OHTO) wants to hear the voice of Mother Nature. But not from traditional artists; they specifically want to hear from the youth of the community.

"We know that young people have powerful perspectives and often the clearest voices when it comes to caring for nature," said Nicole Whiting, the executive director of OHTO. "This contest gives them a chance to be heard."

Haliburton County is a member of OHTO, the not-for-profit provincial organization, which focuses on supporting tourism initiatives in individual communities within the region. Beyond the county, OHTO also works with partners in Lanark, Renfrew, Frontenac, Hastings, and Lennox and Addington.

Since 2010, OHTO has been dedicated to maintaining a 'wander sustainably' approach to tourism, which includes marketing, product and experience development, investment attraction, workforce and skills development, and research.

As of October of last year, OHTO was recognized as a bronze certified destination for sustainable tourism. "The two-year long process required OHTO to assess sustainability performance across four categories," shared a media release on the achievement; "environmental, socio-economic, natural and cultural, and management using GreenStep's Sustainable Tourism Destination Standard."

As a part of maintaining this sustainable approach, OHTO recently launched their 'If Nature Had a Voice' contest, which invites students in Grades 1 through 8 from across Ontario's Highlands region to imagine what Mother Nature might say - if she could speak.

"This campaign aligns with OHTO's commitment to its Wander Sustainably approach to tourism," reads an OHTO press release, "and is part of a broader marketing effort to highlight sustainable tourism and give nature a 'voice' by sharing the stories and information it would want visitors to know."

The submissions are split up by age level, with Grades 1 to 4 required to submit a drawing with a short, written response to complete the sentence: "If Mother Nature could speak, she would tell us…"

For the Grades 5 to 8 age range, students can choose to submit either a written piece of up to 250 words, or an artistic creation in any medium (drawing, painting, collage, etc,) with a caption.

OHTO will select one winner from each grade, who will receive a $50 gift card to a local business of their choice, as well as features on OHTO's social media channels. Entries will be accepted from April 1 to April 30, 2025. Winners will be announced by May 15 on OHTO's social media channels.

To submit a piece, digitally email info@ohto.ca with the subject line: "Mother Nature Contest Submission – [Student's Name] – [Grade]." For full contest rules and eligibility contact info@ohto.ca.

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Federal Election 2025

Nell Thomas: giving everyone a voice

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

Human first, everything else second.

That's what the Liberal candidate for Haliburton - Kawartha Lakes - Brock, Nell Thomas, wants people to know.

That's the core of her campaign. As a physician with a variety of lived experiences in business, in medicine, in philanthropy, in advocacy, she's seen the highest of the highs and the lowest of the lows. And while formalized politics has only recently been added to her ever-growing list of passions, she feels that her wealth of experiences would give her the opportunity to represent the constituents of the riding.

"I feel the pain of my patients," said the Minden-based doctor. "And I will advocate to my last breath for the marginalized, the downtrodden, the underdogs. That's where I do my best work."

Thomas grew up in a political family; with her father spending a portion of his career as a municipal reeve, and her mother a vocal activist for environmental initiatives and human rights.

"We used to have this round wooden table in our house growing up," recalled Thomas. "And everybody and anybody was welcome at that table." She still invites people to sit at that exact wooden table today; that's a care she has carried forward in every step of her career - to have a place for everybody and anybody.

To Thomas, that's what politics should be all about. "We are only as strong as our weakest, and only as well as our sickest," she said.

Dr. Nell Thomas, a local physician and business owner, has announced she will be running as the Liberal candidate for the local riding. /photo submitted

Thomas believes that it is this mindset that aligns her with Canada's current Prime Minister, Mark Carney. "He isn't your typical politician," she noted, "and that's a good thing. We have to have a reimagining of what has been."

She noted that the political landscape has drastically changed since Donald Trump assumed the position of President of the United States earlier this year. "Our world is at risk," she said, "and the biggest threat is to Canada, and the very existence of our country."

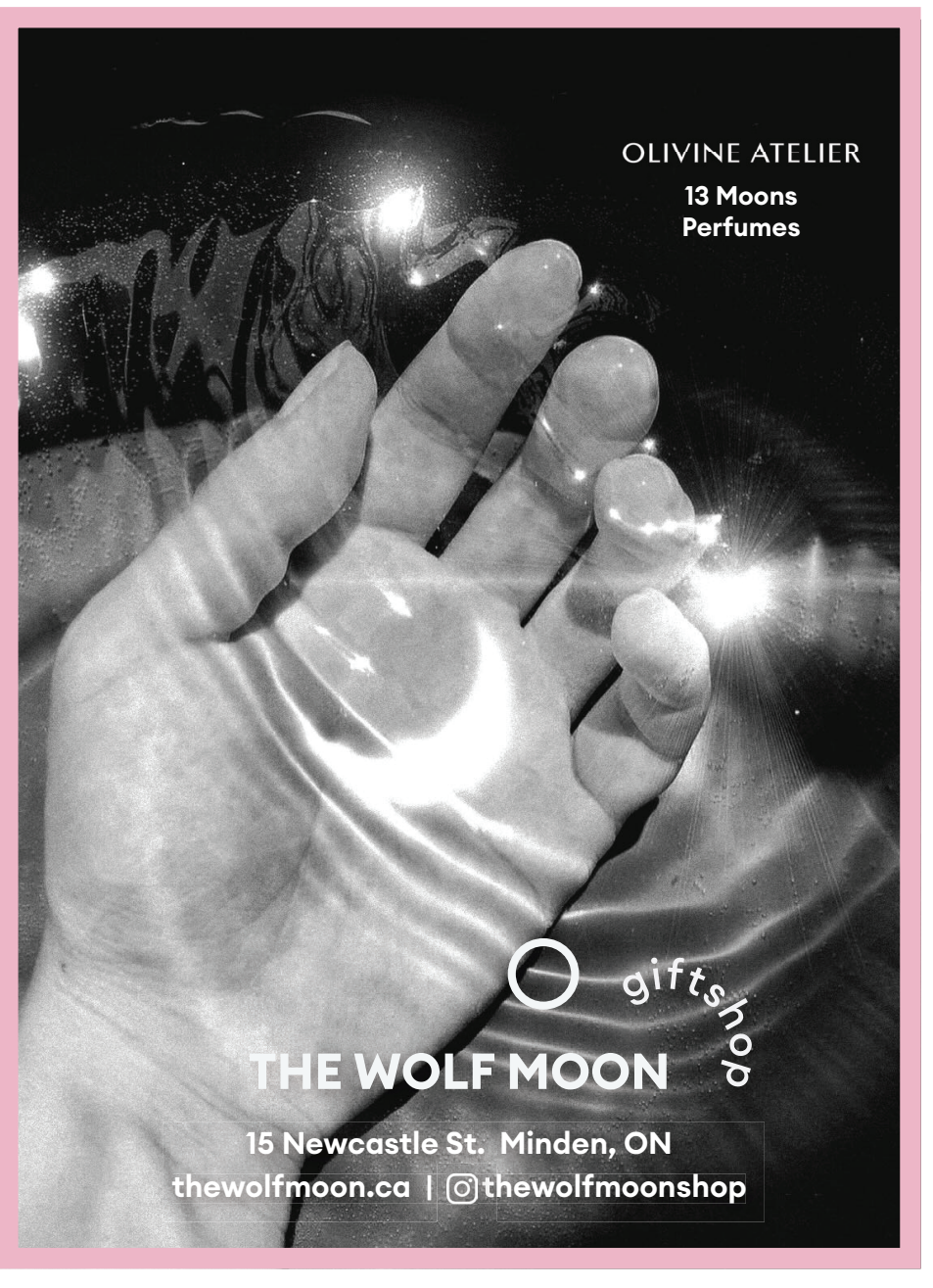
Thomas firmly believes that Carney is the leader needed to maintain the status and dignity of this place we call home. With a background in finance and economics, the Liberal Carney has prioritized the importance of inter-provincial trade and movement, accessible housing for all financial brackets, and above all, securing dignity for everybody, "because that's what makes us thrive," said Thomas.

Thomas believes that Carney understands the core needs of Canadians, and approaches these values with a humanistic component, only available from lived experiences. "He sees a problem and he's got a track record of fixing it," she said. "He's been recognized on a global stage for brilliant economic strategies, and he brings real life talent to the role, and so do I."

While many would recognize Thomas from either her role as a local physician, which she has held for over a decade, or her advocacy for environmental initiatives, many do not see the behind-the-scenes work as a business owner. Thomas has run multiple businesses, and in her current role, manages a team of dedicated staff which makes her practice tick. Prior to business ownership and physician work, Thomas worked as a speech pathologist for over 15 years, quite literally supporting many voices from all walks of life.

And that's what she hopes to continue to do with her role in politics. "I don't do buzz words or sound bites of what people want to hear," she said. "I offer real, lived experiences. I have been up close and personal with grief, pain, social stressors, abuse, food insecurity. I have seen it. And I will fight for everyone."

Human first, everything else second.



Federal Election 2025

Jamie Schmale: prioritizing Canadian content

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

For Jamie Schmale, who has been the Member of Parliament (MP) for Haliburton - Kawartha Lakes - Brock since 2015, the number one priority out of the upcoming federal election is to protect Canadians from the wrath of Donald Trump.

The American President continues to threaten tariffs and regulations that could impact the day to day lives of Canadians, and while the policies seem to lack follow-through, Schmale indicated that he's been hearing ongoing concerns from his constituents.

"I'm hearing at the doors a lot that people are concerned about what is happening in the U.S.," said Schmale, "particularly with the President."

As a representative for the Conservative Party, Schmale feels that Canadians lack the defenses necessary to fight back against Trump. "We have been put in a weakened position by the Liberal Party," said Schmale. "It has put us at a disadvantage."

Schmale comes from a background in radio broadcasting, and started his career as a news anchor for CHUM Media. He currently hosts a Conservative podcast titled *The Blueprint*, which has like-minded politicians discussing the current political climate.

For the upcoming federal election, which is slated for April 28, Schmale hopes to solidify his third term as MP, having won in both 2015 and 2019.

Jamie Schmale hopes to secure his third term as MP for the local riding. /photo submitted

Based on the ongoing trade wars with the United States, Schmale is adamant that if granted power, the Conservative Party would prioritize inter-provincial trade, in an effort to support the Canadian economy. "Our economy is stilted," said Schmale. "And we are in this position because we have been put here by the Liberal government."

Other priorities that Schmale hopes to address include but are not limited to; the cost of living, inflation prices, and the lack of affordable housing in the region.

In terms of canvassing, Schmale values the face-to-face time of meeting constituents at their homes; a strategy that has proven difficult in light of the recent ice storm that ravaged a large portion of his riding. "Nearly every municipality in the riding is currently in a state of emergency," noted Schmale.

But despite the concerns around recent environmental shifts, Schmale noted that tariffs still seem to come to the surface as he heads door to door. "The tariff threat poses some sleepless nights for business owners," he said. "I think our relationship (with the U.S.) is damaged, and we need to make our economy as strong as possible."

Schmale hopes that with a Conservative government, namely Pierre Poilievre in the Prime Minister seat, who is the leader of the party and the current official opposition, there would be some shifts for Canadians. "The future is shaky for a lot," said Schmale. "And some common sense back in Ottawa would help with that."

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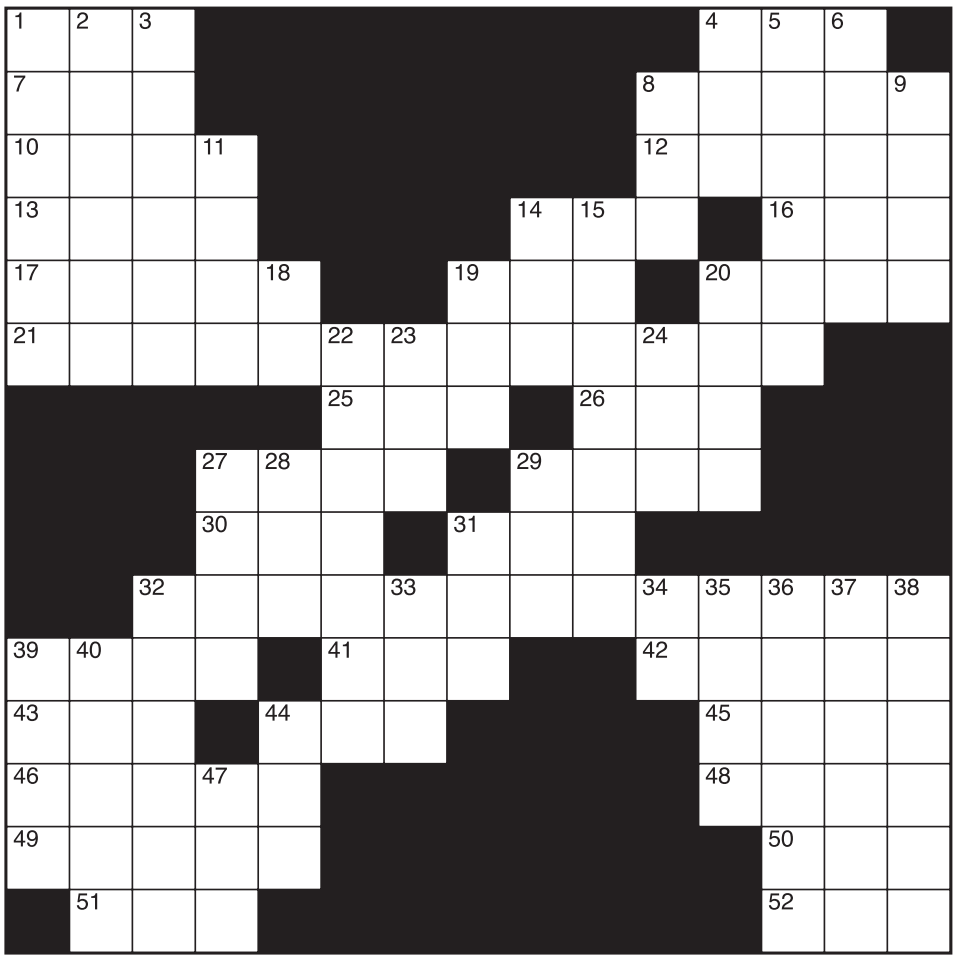


CLUES ACROSS
1. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
4. British thermal unit
7. Afflict
8. Refrain from harming
10. Galls
12. Leg bone
13. Rhine distributary
14. Recipe measurement
16. Chap
17. Useful book
19. Mountain Time
20. Snakelike fishes
21. Places where people live
25. US, Latin America, Canada belong to
26. Periodical
27. A type of sense
29. A way to get possession of
30. Everyone has one
31. Body art
32. Mr. October
39. Abba __, Israeli politician
41. Head movement
42. Jeweled headdress
43. VCR button
44. A way to change color
45. Basketball move
46. Upright stone slab
48. Forest-dwelling monkey
49. Pulsate steadily
50. Negative
51. Sino-Soviet bloc (abbr.)
52. Unit of work

CLUES DOWN
1. Island
2. Pittsburgh ballplayer
3. Chemical compound
4. Indicates density of data (abbr.)
5. Mesas
6. Wild, long-legged sheep
8. Engine additive
9. "CSI" actor George
11. Stony waste matter
14. Thyroid-stimulating hormone
15. Pores in a leaf's epidermis
18. Digraph
19. Married woman
20. Peripheral
22. Northern Italy city
23. Klutz
24. Type of tree
27. Witnessed
28. Popular breakfast food
29. __ Mahal
31. BoSox legend Williams
32. Professional drivers
33. Atom or molecule type
34. The Constitution State
35. Chest to store clothes (Scottish)
36. Type of solution
37. Speaker
38. Specifying
39. Formerly (archaic)
40. Wiseman and Krom are two
44. The bill in a restaurant
47. Tennis shot

Answers on page 15

Why the election matters

JESSICA SLADE

Special to the Echo

Every few years, we're asked to head to our local polling stations and cast a vote. If you live in the riding of Haliburton – Kawartha Lakes – Brock, you might be thinking: "What's the point? We already know how this riding will vote. It always seems to go the same way."

I want to challenge that thinking and suggest that participating in the election is about so much more than the outcome on voting day.

In the last federal election, voter turnout in our riding was just under 59 per cent – slightly below the national average. That means four out of 10 people stayed home. And when fewer people vote, fewer voices are heard. If we don't show up, we risk being overlooked, and furthermore, voting is about deciding who holds power in your name. If you don't use your voice, someone else will use theirs for you.

Even in a 'safe' riding, every vote matters. Not just because it contributes to the national outcome, but because it signals what our community cares about. Politicians pay attention to turnout. So do parties, government workers, and the media.

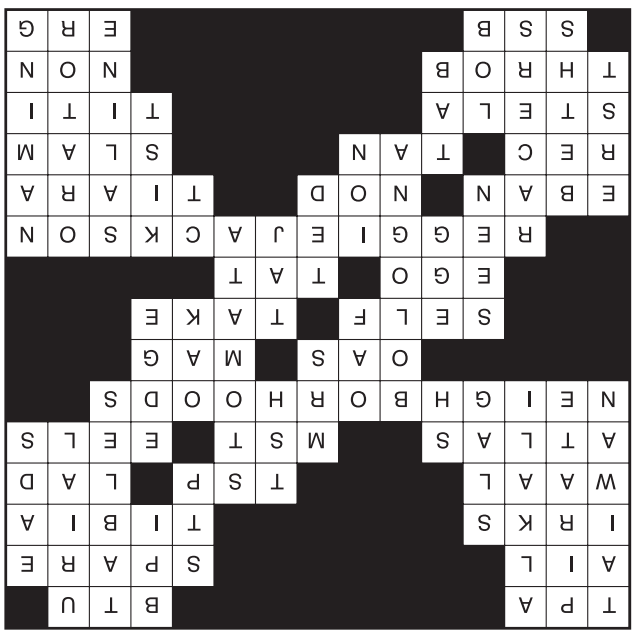
Over the next few weeks, I'll be writing about the upcoming federal election and why it matters here at home. I'll break down what's at stake – not just in Ottawa, but in places like Haliburton, Minden, Bobcaygeon, and Lindsay. We'll explore how to navigate the election with confidence and curiosity. This won't be about telling you who to vote for. It's about helping you feel equipped to make a choice that reflects your values, your priorities, and your hopes for the future.

Maybe you've never voted before. Maybe you used to, but haven't in a while. Or maybe you've always voted, but you're not sure it makes a difference anymore. Whatever your relationship with politics, I hope this series reminds you that you still have a say.

Because voting isn't just about who wins – it's about participation, connection, and community. And when more of us show up, our collective voice gets louder.

Let's not sleepwalk through another election. Let's lean in, ask questions, and make our votes count. Because this time, like every other time before, it really does matter.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS



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Spring is in the air

The Haliburton Special Olympics Red Wolves Team hosted its annual Spring Fling dinner and dance fundraiser at the Haliburton Legion on Saturday evening. The sold out event featured a 50-50 draw, a silent auction and a lovely dinner and dessert spread. DJ Ron Murphy provided the soundtrack while members of the Red Wolves and their guests danced the night away. /ADAM FRISK special to the *Echo*

Red Wolves members Jason Kitchener and Lucas Anderson try on wigs and facial hair as part of a photobooth station during the Spring Fling on Saturday evening.

Red Wolves teammates Christopher Strype and Ainsley Pascoe pose for a photo.

Rowan Pettinella shares a laugh with Priscilla Diaz.

Organizers prep for the big 50-50 draw.

Red Wolves member Brodie Mason poses for a photo with curling coach Andrew Fletcher.

Family and friends of the Red Wolves enjoy some conversation prior to dinner.

Jason Kitchener gives the thumbs-up while Brodie Mason decorates his burger.

Red Wolves members take a break from dancing to pose.

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Private campground in the Minden/ Haliburton area requires a reliable **SUMMER MAINTENANCE** PERSON from May 10 to October 13, 2025. $20/hour. Duties Include: general maintenance; cleaning park grounds, rec hall, washrooms; operating small grass cutting equipment; ability to lift over 40 lbs; assisting with various small projects as assigned. Approximately 5 hours a day. Morning start time. Willing to work weekends. Must possess a valid "G" driver's license. A good driving record is required. Please submit your resume to **neca.bod@gmail.com**

Youth Coordinator Cambridge Street United Church in Lindsay, ON, is seeking a Youth Coordinator and play a vital role in fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment for the young members of our congregation, guiding them in their spiritual journey, and organizing engaging activities that promote growth and community. The position begins with an average of 20 hours a week for a 3-month period with an initial focus of continuing to develop a core group of children on Sunday mornings in a welcoming, safe, and faith-based environment based on the teachings of Jesus. The plan is to also explore programming for events over the summer months. A position description can be found on our website www.theunitedchurch.com. Application deadline April 15, 2025.

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In Loving Memory of

Dennis Edward Middlehurst

passed away on March 1, 2025, at the age of 86, with his caring daughters (Debbie, Laurie & Lesley) and his grandson Brandon, by his side. Dennis was born September 27, 1938, in Ontario. Dennis was predeceased by his parents Clifford & Elizabeth (aka: Patsy), his brother Ross, and his daughter Sandra (aka Sam). He is survived by his children Barry (Jessica), Mike (Dianne), Christine (Lyle), Debbie (Peter), Laurie (Lesley) & Tim (Wendy), so many grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and close friends in both Orangeville & Ingoldsby.

Dennis was an incredibly hard-working man, and it shows in all the children he was proud to have raised. Dennis founded Hi-Quality Carbide Tooling Inc. in 1980 and worked alongside many of his children, until Dennis's well-earned retirement. He was always a big dreamer and a huge music fan of both Alabama and Dire Straits. Dennis loved cars and enjoyed sharing stories of his first brand new car; a 1957 Chev. If you couldn't find Dennis mowing the lawn, fishing, boating or woodworking & building planters for family and friends, then you were sure to find him reading the newspaper, watching history shows or enjoying a nap on his recliner with a dog on his lap.

To honour Dennis, a private celebration of life, will take place in the spring. Invites to follow. Dad/Grandpa – may you finally Rest in Peace.

In Loving Memory of

Eleanor Carey

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of our beloved Mother and Nan, Eleanor Carey born on November 10, 1930 - April 1, 2025 at the age of 94.

Elly is predeceased by her husband (Cameron Carey), sister (Wendy Hunziker), grandson (Todd Ofield) and great granddaughter (Maeve Woodward).

She is survived by her children Kim (Ken) and Drew (Karen), her grandchildren Kelly (Luke), Annie (Tyler), Brett, Katie (Stefan), Tanis (Cory), Paige (Jesse), and great grandchildren Pearce, Miles, Charlie, Jake, Cole, Macie, Brooklyn, Everett, Hayes, Brey, Dax, Wells.

Elly would also like a special mention for friends Verne (Marlin) Gartshore, John Ayres, and Elsie Moore for whom she had a great deal of respect for.

Known for her strong-willed personality and determination, Elly approached life with unwavering conviction and loyalty, her stubbornness was both a trademark and a source of admiration. She treated everyone like family and she was a true master of laughter bringing joy and lightheartedness to everyone she knew.

Ellys presence will be greatly missed but her legacy and impact will live on for years to come.

A private family service will be held at a later date.

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High school renovation plan jumps to $4.5M

by PETER DOWNS
Staff Reporter

A $2.8-million face-lift originally planned for Haliburton Highlands Secondary School has now evolved into a $4.5-million proposal for major reconstructive surgery.

But once the bandages come off, the board and its architect are hoping their patient should be fit and healthy for up to the next three decades.

Over the past several months school board administrators have been gazing into a crystal ball with HHSS principal Gary Brohman, trying to see what kind of high school the county will need 25 years into the future.

And what they saw in the vision that emerged was a vastly different school building than the existing one.

Last week the administrators unveiled a preliminary renovation plan they believe could transform HHSS into the ideal school to serve the community's needs well into the 21st Century.

The multi-million-dollar plan, which is only a proposal at this stage, would require the board to undertake massive reconstruction

The architect hired by the board to carry out the job estimates the cost of the work could ring in at about $4.5-million. And that price does not include the normally high cost of removing asbestos from existing walls during the upgrade.

The board has already received approval from the province for approximately 50 per cent funding to put a $2.8-million addition on the high school.

See SCHOOL page 3

DECISIONS, DECISIONS: Adam Aggett, the chairman of Federation of Student Rights and Opinions, looks for advice during the tough negotiating session with Peter Forgrave, principal of Archie Stouffer Elementary School. Along with fellow ASES Grade 8 students Katrina Matysek, Sarah Bloomfield and Daniel Vanderlip (hidden), Adam presented a list of grievances during the mock student strike last week. For story, please see page 6

MNR bans brush burning

Lack of rain raises danger of fires getting out of control

by STEPHEN SHAW
Staff Reporter

The recent dry spell and gusting winds have turned area fields and forests into tinderboxes, say MNR fire officials who are urging people to put off their spring burnings.

The Ministry of Natural Resources has cancelled all fire permits after more than 63 wildfires during the last two weeks.

Last weekend alone, there were 27 forest, grass and brush fires in the county and by Wednesday, the number grew to more than 40 in the Haliburton, Pembroke and Bancroft areas.

In comparison, there was just one fire last March.

A remote forest area near Loon Lake in Monmouth caught fire Sunday morning roaring through two hectares of cutover. Six MNR firefighters gained access by helicopter and four-wheel drive vehicles. It took them until later in the evening to extinguish the blaze, which was still smoldering yesterday.

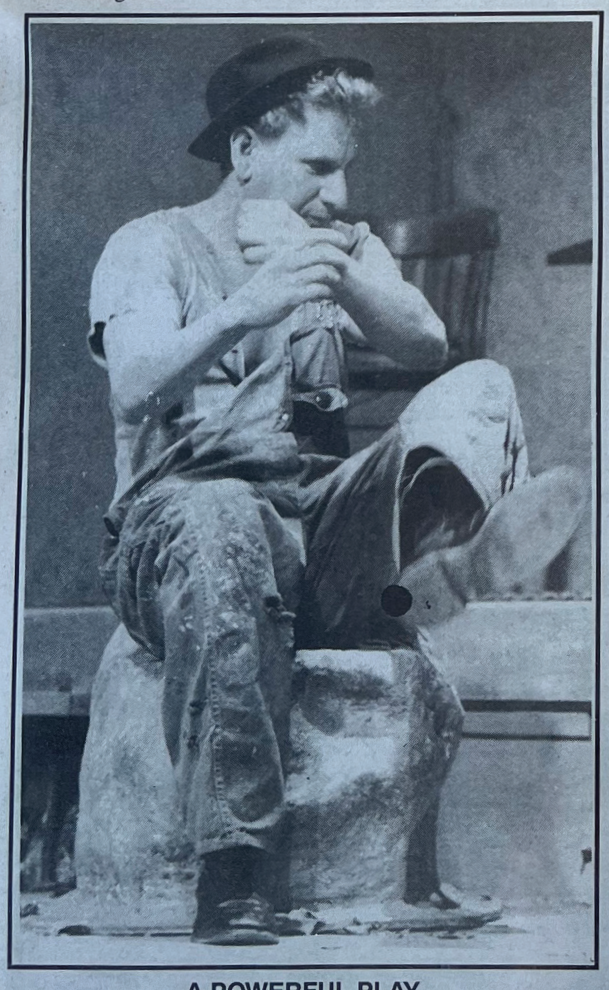
"It was burning pretty hot. It's pretty unusual for the hardwoods to catch fire this early but it's just so dry this year," says MNR Fire Prevention Technician John Bishop.

In Dysart last Sunday, firefighters worked two hours to control a two-acre brush fire at Eagle Lake. A West Guilford burning also brought firefighters to the scene recently.

"There was no property loss in those but that's a real possibility if a wildfire gets away," said Dysart Fire Chief Miles Maughan.

While a cool, damp couple of days late last week gave firefighters a bit of breathing space, there was no siginificant amount

See FIRES page 3



A POWERFUL PLAY

The Highlands Little Theatre production of A Moon for the Misbegotten opened last Friday and continues this coming weekend. Above, lead Tom Robinson. For a review, see page 28

Local Bell workers on hold over next job cuts

by STEPHEN SHAW
Staff Reporter

Local Bell Canada workers are waiting on hold to find out whether the phone company's massive cuts will affect them.

Bell announced last week it plans to slash 10,000 jobs from its workforce of 45,000 in what will be the largest labour downsizing in the nation's history.

"We don't really know what's happening in terms of how it will affect us locally," says Haliburton Highlands Supervisor Mel Watson. "We probably won't know for a few months."

Greg Coumbs, local union representative for the Communications, Electrical and Paperworkers of Canada, says Bell employees in the county have little concern that their jobs are in jeopardy.

"There's only the 20 guys up here and we're kept pretty busy so it's not like we're overstaffed . Basically we feel like we're pretty

See BELL page 2

INSIDE THIS WEEK:

Welcome to the new Echo
See this week's editorial .... page 10

Better recycling
Waste audit hopes to improve school's recycling habits... see page 4

An insider's view
Paul's story begins a series of articles looking inside women's shelters ... see Second Section Front

Time Travel
Monmouth Figure Skating Club stages its annual carnival before a delighted audience ... see page 33

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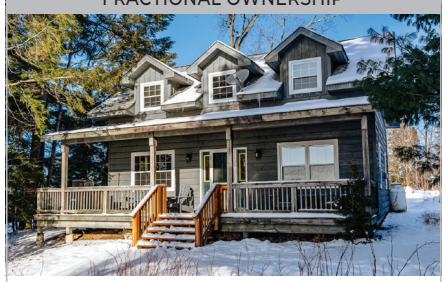

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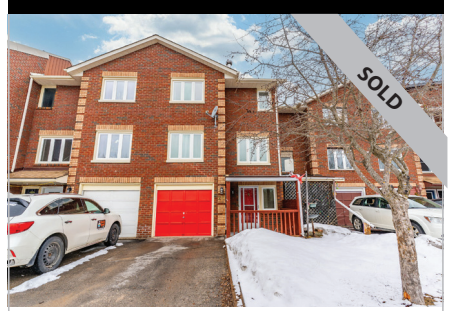

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GELERT ROAD
$575,000

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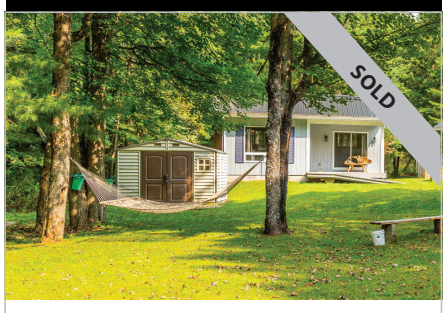

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